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Author(s): Supapat Sinlapawanich

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**BUSINESS PROJECT FOR
MORAKOT GALLERY:
FOCUSING ON THE CHESTER, CHESHIRE MARKET**

SUPAPAT SINLAPAWANICH

CHESTER BUSINESS SCHOOL

November 2011

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Abstract

This dissertation considers whether it would be feasible for the jewellery shop MORAKOT GALLERY to open a business in Chester, Cheshire. The research presents perspectives on the decision making process, marketing strategies, consumer behaviour, the Internet and E-commerce of a focus group of people who specifically live in Chester, Cheshire. The study includes academic references used to compare and contrast the jewellery business around the world as well as in the UK. The study shows that the focus group seems to love the products from MORAKOT GALLERY, making positive comments about them. The study also shows that demographic factors influence the views of the focus group.

The study, therefore, provides suggestions for MORAKOT GALLERY's future business strategy.

Declaration

All work is original and has not been submitted previously for any academic purpose.
All secondary sources are acknowledged.

Signed:

Date:

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the research

The jewellery business is now a universal business on all continents. As long as this world has women, the jewellery business will never die. Morakot Gallery is a jewellery business established in Bangkok, Thailand in 1984 (sourced by Morakot Gallery website, 2009). Morakot Gallery specialises in authentic oriental gemstones and semi-precious stones. Furthermore, the gallery designs its own jewellery consisting of necklaces, bracelets, rings, brooches, pendants, and earrings. It also makes tailor-made products for all customers who want special pieces for themselves. Morakot Gallery has a shop at River City Shopping Complex, Bangkok, Thailand. The gallery's website is www.morakotgallery.com.

At the present time, the Asian jewellery business is a huge market. According to Forbes (2010), Bangkok, Thailand is the biggest producer of single piece jewellery in the world. Thanks to its rich resources, Bangkok has an abundance of valuable materials, such as rough gemstones; and artisans and jewellery makers producing good quality jewellery. The nature of Thailand, in terms of cultures, aesthetics and atmosphere, makes it an outstanding country, especially for jewellery products. In accordance with Forbes (2010), Thai people have an eye for beauty, using traditional designs in jewellery products and making them very attractive to customers, especially foreigners.

As Thai jewellery has its own identity and the quality of the products is unequivocal, it is very interesting to consider the feasibility of a Thai jewellery business opening in Chester, Cheshire, where there are currently no such shops. This suggests an opening for a Thai Jewellery business in Chester, although it has to be considered that the very low economic growth in the UK (sourced by BBC.com), may have a negative influence on a newcomer jewellery business.

This research will help to understand the nature of people in Chester in terms of consumer behaviour and marketing strategies, as well as business strategies.

In summary, the purpose of this research is to identify whether it is feasible for Morakot Gallery to open a business in Chester, Cheshire and whether the business should be a local store or an online shop.

1.2 Research Question

Is it feasible for MORAKOT GALLERY to open a business in Chester, Cheshire, and if so, should that business be a local store or an online shop?

1.2.1 Objectives of the study:

- To scrutinise the market in Chester, Cheshire relating to MORAKOT GALLERY's business in terms of a niche market such as the jewellery business.
- To examine the feasibility of opening a Thai international business in Chester, Cheshire by considering cultural differences, strengths and weaknesses of the two countries, and the central focus that can be relied on in both countries.
- To differentiate between a local store and an online shop in Chester, Cheshire in terms of consumer behaviour, customs and culture.
- To consider laws and regulations in terms of international business in Chester, Cheshire.

To answer the research question in this dissertation, searches will be made of academic records including journals, text books, newspapers, magazines and websites in order to consider the sphere of the jewellery business in both Asian and European countries. Furthermore, this dissertation will consider the Cheshire West and Chester Council's website in order to support the research question, since this question is related to Chester, Cheshire. In addition, in order to gain some perspectives of prospective customers, a focus group will be involved in the research.

1.3 Justification for the research

- 1.3.1 To broaden intellectual horizons, especially in relation to the jewellery business in a specific area.
- 1.3.2 To survey Chester, Cheshire in terms of consumer behaviour in the local area.
- 1.3.3 To scrutinise Chester, Cheshire in terms of consumer behaviour and local interest.
- 1.3.4 To examine marketing factors in Chester, Cheshire in terms of strengths and weaknesses in order to understand the nature of business in the local area.

1.4 Methodology

Methods of research will include use of a focus group questionnaire, and academic research of journals, newspapers, textbooks, websites, magazines, which will lead to the analysis and conclusion of the research question.

1.5 Outline of the MBA dissertation

1.5.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

This Chapter will detail the background of the research and the research question. It will also state the objectives of this research, which will be addressed at the conclusion of this paper.

1.5.2 Chapter 2: The literature review

This chapter includes academic research focusing on the crucial model appertaining to the jewellery business, using journals, newspapers, text books, websites, and magazine articles on the jewellery business, international marketing, consumer behaviour, and Internet shopping (e-business).

1.5.3 Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter illustrates the methods used in this research, which consists of a focus group's questionnaire, ideas and several perspectives from academic research, rules and concepts related to the research question. This chapter also details the step-by-step method of preparing the questionnaire, such as the research design, research procedures, etc.

1.5.4 Chapter 4: Findings

Chapter 4 elaborates the findings from chapters 1 and 2, as well as the opinions of respondents answering the questionnaire. The findings will contribute to the conclusion in the next chapter. This chapter provides a crucial element of the research as it includes the opinions of the focus group. The findings constitute primary data, collected from people living in Chester, Cheshire.

1.5.5 Chapter 5: Analysis and conclusion

This chapter analyses and scrutinises all the information in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 to formulate a business plan for the future of MORAKOT GALLERY Shops. In the final part of this chapter,

the author addresses the research question by making some useful, adaptable recommendations for a future business strategy.

1.6 Definitions

1.6.1 Authentic gemstones

According to Dictionary.com, a gemstone is a precious or semiprecious stone that can be cut and polished for use as a gem. Besides, according to Primer magazine (2001), gemstones are natural stones found in nature. Laboratory-created stones, as the name implies, are made in a laboratory.

1.6.2 Niche market

According to Dictionary.com, a niche market is a demand for a very specialised product or commodity.

1.6.3 Morakot Gallery

According to Morakot Gallery website (2011), Morakot Gallery is a jewellery shop that has been established in Bangkok, Thailand for more than 25 years.

1.7 Summary

This chapter presents the research problem and the research question, as well as the steps that will deliver the answer and conclusion. It shows that this research is justified in proceeding according to the outline.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher details all sources of information relevant to the research question, such as journals, news, textbooks, business magazines, jewellery magazines, newspapers, as well as websites, and considers whether each piece of information is related to the research question and whether it will support it or is controversial.

2.2 Parent disciplines/fields/themes

There are four main parts to this research question that are relevant to the researcher and which need to be emphasised, consisting of the jewellery business, marketing and international business, e-commerce and Internet shopping, as well as consumer behaviour. These four parts are imperative to the research question and help the researcher to reach a conclusion.

Previous research is considered as well as concepts and strategies relevant to the research question.

This chapter is divided into 4 parts:

- Decision making process of consumers
- Marketing strategies models
 - Marketing Mix
 - SWOT analysis
 - Porter's Five Forces model
 - PESTLE Analysis
- Consumer behaviour
- E-Commerce and Internet shopping

2.3 Decision making process of consumers

In order to answer the research question, this research focuses specifically on jewellery-buying decision making processes. The consumer takes five steps before deciding to purchase products or services, as illustrated by Brassington and Pettitt (2000). The five steps of the decision making process are *problem recognition*, *information search*, *information evaluation*, *decision* and *post-purchase evaluation*. The chart below demonstrates the stages of the consumer's decision making process:

Figure1: 5 steps of decision making process; adapted from Brassington and Pettitt (2000) in Principles of Marketing (p.93).

Karo (1968) claims that people purchase jewellery because they want it, not because they need it and that jewellery products do not need hard-sell because of their innate quality. Thus, Karo's statement mentioned above, in identifying potential purchasers as wanting rather than needing, would place them at the stage of problem recognition (stage 1).

In order to reach stages 2 and 3, which are information search and information evaluation, Chikweche and Fletcher (2011) identify price as playing a vital role in the purchase decision. Consumers examine the information they have gathered and make a decision later on related to stage 4: decision. For example, the information evaluation factors include the availability of products, income of the buyers and value consciousness. Lastly, the 5th stage is the stage after purchase of the product, when consideration is given to whether or not the product lives up to the consumer's expectation.

Another model of the decision making process comes from Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg (2010) who identify 3 stages of the buying decision behaviour, composed of *routine response behaviour*, *limited problem-solving* and *extensive problem-solving*.

Figure 2: 3 stages of buying decision behaviour. (Solomon, Bamossy, et al. (2010). Consumer Behaviour: A European Perspective (p.318)).

The model in figure 2 is a continuum for the consumers' effort before purchasing any products or services. The *routine response behaviour* means consumers may buy the product with less or no conscious effort, related to low-cost products, frequent purchasing, low consumer involvement, familiar product class and brands, as well as little thought, search or time given to purchase. *Limited problem-solving* means consumers buy the product by using simple decision rules to make choices. Last, *extensive problem-solving* means consumers deliberately search for as much information as they can before buying the product or the best alternative (Solomon, Bamossy and et al., 2010).

For example, according to Chikweche and Fletcher (2011), the consumer's perception of the importance of branding in their purchase decision making consists of brand image, brand equity, integrated marketing communication, distribution strategy, product strategy as well as pricing strategy. The researchers also mention the consumers' perception of branding by examining the importance of brands in consumers' research decisions.

2.4 Marketing strategy models

This research will consider the models pertaining to international business in order to highlight the research question. Havila, Johanson and Thilenius (2004) comment that in the world of business relationships, the basic view is that there are two parties, which are the selling party and the buying party. Both parties directly interact with each other.

Furthermore, they claim that the intermediaries in international settings are sales subsidiaries and agents, which are significant factors to be considered.

In addition, international business is related to cultural business since there are two different continents to be considered in this research, as supported by Usui Claude, and Lee Anne (2005). These scholars state that international marketing is a way to identify, categorise, analyse and choose market segments. People basically use culture unconsciously as a tool with which to communicate and interact with one another.

2.4.1 Marketing mix

Business life is often unpredictable and unexpected. Nevertheless, as confirmed by Sargut and McGrath (2011), in today's hyper intertwined world, this cannot be prevented. In accordance with Doyle (2002), marketing mix is a set of marketing decisions comprising product, price, place (or distribution), promotion, and especially services and staff that aid positioning strategy and accomplish objectives.

Similarly, Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell (2006) maintain that the marketing mix is a toolkit helping to satisfy customers.

Product:

Doyle (2002) illustrates that the marketing mix is composed of product variety, product performance, product features, product design, product presentation, product packaging, size, and brand name.

Many scholars have undertaken research on the jewellery business over a long period of time. Sarett (1960) confirms that it has been a focus of attention for many years; however, the jewellery business is vulnerable owing to its image as a luxury product (*product presentation*). However, jewellery makes people feel romantic and sentimental, and it is a very impressive gift (*product presentation*).

Bryson and Taylor (2010) argue that it is not only the product itself but also the brand of the product that is a relevant factor (*brand name*). It is undeniable that there are many imitation products from competitors; therefore, a company needs to escape from that problem by concentrating on inimitability, design, brand, customisation and the provision of services.

Holewa and Paul (2009) state that displaying jewellery well is crucial; as well as showing a good selection of styles and colours, which highlights the importance of the product marketing mix.

Larceneux, Rieunier and Fady (2007) support Holewa and Paul, agreeing that, owing to the existence of the hypermarket in today's world, consumers expect to choose from a wide selection, therefore, businesses should improve their chances of success by increasing the variety of goods available to consumers (*product features*).

White and Martha (2011) elaborate that jewellery never becomes obsolete, using the quote "everything old is new again". The authors highlight that the jewellery business requires time and money in order to compete with businesses using good marketing strategies.

According to Schupak (2005), women like to have something new and different, therefore it is imperative that jewellers focus on design and differentiation (*product design and product features*).

Price:

In accordance with Doyle (2002), price in marketing mix comprises list price, discounts, allowances, geographic pricing, payment terms and credit terms.

Brassington and Pettitt (2000) describe price as a way to judge the value of the product, which is reflected in buyer behaviour. In other words, it is obvious that price plays a pivotal role in business. Nevertheless, in the jewellery business it is different. Bryson and Taylor (2010) explain that jewellery business industries adopt quality-based strategies rather than using price-based strategies. Owing to the competitive nature of the jewellery business, however, some companies try to outshine their competitors by using price-based competition; however, this is not applicable in today's business.

Bryson and Taylor (2010) offer a crucial explanation, especially for the research question, as their article focuses on England.

Moreover, Wright (1999) emphasises that price will vary, depending upon the use of different channels. For example, in accordance with Mangeksdorf (2011), price will be very tactic when it is set within a round dollar number, helping communicate a meaningful message to customers, as less pay attention to the right-hand digits in a price than to the left of the decimal point.

Place (Distribution):

Doyle (2002) states that the marketing mix includes channel selection, market coverage, channel variety, distribution directness, density of distribution, and dealer support.

Larceneux, Rieunier, Fady (2007) make the point that businesses should concentrate on reputation and quality as well as speed. In addition, the window showcase (channel selection) has a significant impact when a few pieces of jewellery are displayed.

Promotion:

According to Doyle (2002), promotion of the marketing mix includes sales force, advertising, public relations, consumer promotion, trade promotion and direct marketing.

For example, Chikweche and Fletcher (2011) state that “using social networks was a key strategy for containing costs such as promotion and market research”, which supports the direct marketing mentioned above.

Nevertheless, Wright (1999) makes the point that even though promotional strategies attract consumers, they may redirect consumers from a focus on value of the product to its price.

Services and staff:

Doyle (2002) states that services and staff in a marketing mix consist of pre-sale services, point-of-sale services, post-sale services, support staff, staff motivation, tasks and responsibilities.

Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell (2006) maintain that services are difficult to measure due to their intangible nature.

2.4.2 SWOT analysis

Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell (2006) illustrate that a SWOT analysis is the examination of an organisation's strengths and weaknesses (internal factors), opportunities and threats (external factors).

Strengths and Weaknesses:

Wright (1999) explains that both strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, and that internal factors are controllable in an organisation.

According to Bryson and Taylor (2010), in order to avoid product imitation, a company should have its own continual product innovations (strengths). In other words, a company requires new products all the time to attract the market.

Additionally, the benefits of having local firms (local stores) are that they enhance cultural sensitivity, enable face to face contact, improve relationships with consumers, attract preferential treatment from governments, develop an understanding of local culture and assist with management of policy changes and environmental instability (Chikweche and Fletcher, 2011).

Fisher and Smith (2011) focus on the brand, arguing that even though the brand is intangible and symbolic, it is essential for the company. The brand helps to create an information base and encourages consumer confidence.

In the same way, Cayla and Eckhardt (2008) agree that brands help to project a good image of the company.

However, it is not only the brand but also the services of the product that have an influence on the business (Hopkins, 2011). Hopkins points out that nowadays products often include services, which he calls servitisation. With servitisation, product costs increase.

Opportunities and Threats:

According to Wright (1999), opportunities and threats are external factors that are uncontrollable.

Johnsen, Aycan, et al (2010) believe companies should consider the relationship between organisational structures and governance mechanisms and the distribution of profits across national boundaries (external factors).

Furthermore, Johanson and Vahlne (2011) explicate that it is necessary to devote attention to business relationships because this builds trust and leads to exchange in business spheres. In other words, business relationships form business networks, helping connect with one another, such as suppliers or customers.

2.4.3 Porter's Five Forces model

Porter (2008) created a model that is essential for assessing competitive position and the position that an organisation may be considering moving into. Bambre (2011) describes Porter's Five Forces model, which emphasises external competitive forces and internal threats.

Figure 3: Porter's Five Forces model; adapted from *Porter's Five Forces model*.

For instance, Fisher and Smith (2011) describe that in today's marketing, consumers have more *buying power*. Because of new communication technology, especially the digital era that emerged from the introduction of the Internet, consumers now have more information and choice.

2.4.4 PESTLE analysis

Rivkin and Magaretta (2008) make the salient point that a healthy business structure should highlight a competitive concern similar to the company's own position. Bambre (2011) outlines the PESTLE analysis, which consists of *political, economic, sociological, technological, legal and environmental* factors. Dibb, Simkin, Pride, and Ferrell (2006) explicate that this model is an evaluation of the marketing environment.

For instance, Douglas and Craig (2010) elaborate on methods for assessing opportunities and competition in international markets and deciding which countries to enter, how to enter international markets via exporting, licensing, franchising, joint venture or wholly owned operations, and timing and sequencing of international markets.

Addressing political *factors*, Relf (2011) describes the UK government's aims to create the most competitive tax system, since many business owners are

concerned and apprehensive about tax issues. He also says that the UK government wants to attract business investment from around the world.

In terms of *economic factors*, the news from Accountancy Magazine (2011) describes UK businesses as having become frustrated by a lack of action to improve the economic system. Confidence in the UK economy has fallen dramatically, particularly affecting future business plans. According to Connor (2011), businesses are re-considering investment plans and sales due to the deteriorating economy. Because of the slow growth in the UK, the Bank of England has decided to inject 75bn GBP to help the economy.

Considering *sociological factors*, Usunier and Lee (2005) demonstrate that the UK has its own marketing style due to the cultures and norms. The UK prefers to use a soft sell approach rather than a hard sell approach to avoid coercive selling practices.

With regard to *technological factors*, according to Fisher and Smith (2011), technology helps consumers to have more authority by taking many forms such as clips, pictures, forum discussions, even Facebook and Twitter. In other words, technology creates communities, but only smart companies will find solutions and harness the marketing potential of these communities as well as developing customer loyalty.

2.5 Consumer behaviour

Larceneux, Rieunier, Fady (2007) state that owing to differentiation of people's preferences, customers will be more attracted by the availability of various options rather than having a limited choice.

One of the strategies used for this research question is the process of decision making by Hoyer, and MacInnis (2004) who maintain that consumers will decide whether to purchase a product or not based on factors such as ethnic influences, social class influences, age, gender and household influences, social influences, as well as personality and lifestyle.

Similarly, Yvette Reisinger (2009) identifies several factors impacting on human needs, such as *demographic variables*: age, gender and marital status, *socio-cultural variables*: family, groups, neighbours and social class, *economic variables*: income, time,

employment, price, taxes and exchange rates, *geographic variables*: place of origin and climate, *psychological variables*: learning, perception, personality, attitudes, self-concept, beliefs, motivation, interests and lifestyle, *political variables*: war, instability, terrorism, *technological variables*: new developments in IT, etc.

Furthermore, according to Bryson and Taylor (2010), people want something different, and unique. For example, as Schupak (2005) mentions, women buy jewellery for themselves, resulting from a change in their buying behaviour. Women buy jewellery as a symbol of self-reward in order to fulfil an “I love me” concept.

Nevertheless, today’s economic turbulence may affect buying behaviour. For instance, several jewellery businesses in the United States closed during the last two years according to Gassman, Ken (2009), due to economic crisis.

However, Martin (2011) states that because people interact with one another, nowadays social networks play a vital role in people’s behaviour. As a result, people influence each other, which creates differentiation.

2.6 E-Commerce and Internet shopping

Business to Business eMarketplaces, by Raffaello, Alessandro and Sara (2008), mentions successful business models and related critical success factors. They also state that the business to business support consists of eSourcing, eCatalog, eSupply Chain execution, and eSupply Chain Collaboration.

According to Jihyun and Jihye (2005) it is essential in today’s world to provide Internet window shopping for consumers. They found that 50 percent of online customers purchased from online stores, and 20 percent of offline customers also used online stores in order to check the products and services that they preferred.

According to Richardson (2001), using the Internet changes the way customers shopped. It also helps customer intimacy with the store. The internet helps the shop to understand the customers, trends, and needs of customers. Sometimes, the shop seems less important because of the Internet.

Nowadays, online businesses play a crucial role, as Liautaud and Hammond (2001) point out, as money spent online will continue to increase because of the many advantages of the Internet experience, such as acquiring new customers, creating a

partnership with the customer, increasing switching cost, increasing competitive position and enabling a potential new source of revenue.

For instance, Martin (2011) claims that the Internet or social media provide two-way communication, enabling viewers or prospective customers to see or listen to as much information as they want. More importantly, it also creates powerful word of mouth advertising to help the business.

In the same way, as stated by Miller and Christakis (2011), social networks play a vital role in E-commerce for business owners. Social networks make a connection and influence peer groups. If businessmen were able to analyse the trends, they could benefit from social networks.

2.7 Summary

In conclusion, strenuous effort goes into the literature review in order to gather academic information from journals, newspapers, the Internet, and texts pertaining to the research question, to pave an understanding of this research. The next chapter is methodology, which will explicate the way in which the researcher will look for the answer to the research question and evaluate the outcomes of the research questions step by step.

Chapter3: Methodology

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is related to the methods that this research adopts in order to analyse the findings and reach a conclusion. In this research, there are primary and secondary data connected to quantitative data collection. This chapter will be divided into seven parts as follows:

- Research philosophy and approaches
- Research strategy and justification
- Hypothesis of this research
- Research procedure
- Limitations
- Ethical considerations
- Summary

3.2 Research philosophy and approaches

This research is based on realism and requires a philosophical approach related to scientific enquiry (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Realism is the literal sense of reality as truth, based upon human perception.

The approach that the researcher develops in this research question is a deductive approach. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the deductive approach links to scientific research using anticipation and prediction of the outcome.

Quantitative data, as described by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), is the primary methodology used in this research. This is a data collection technique, such as a questionnaire or even data analysis procedure, e.g. graphs or statistics. The researcher uses a sampling group to answer the questionnaires and lead to the final conclusion.

Two-categorical information is used in this research, which consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data is the data collected directly by the researcher. Data is gathered from residents of Chester, Cheshire, using a 4-page paper questionnaire, after they have watched a power point presentation.

Secondary data is collected by the researcher from books, journals, newspapers, magazine articles as well as websites, which is an indirect way of gathering information as already mentioned in Chapter 2.

3.3 Research strategy

3.3.1 Justification for the selected paradigm and methodology

Apart from research philosophy and approaches, this research uses a survey strategy, which is associated with the deductive approach. A survey strategy allows the gathering of data using a questionnaire as a sample (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). This is appropriate for this research, which seeks to obtain the perspectives of people who live in Chester, Cheshire, because this strategy allows the researcher to analyse and compare responses. One advantage of using the survey strategy is that questionnaires can be thoughtfully prepared to enable respondents to answer questions quickly and easily.

3.4 Hypothesis of this research

Demographic variables such as age, sex, race, ethnic origin, income, family, etc. have an influence on decision making and buying requirements of people who live in Chester.

3.5 Research design

In accordance with Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the research design is a general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research question.

3.5.1 Design of instrument(s)

There are many components to this research as follows:

- ❖ Clear Objectives: Four main objectives, detailed in chapter1, support this research question.
- ❖ Data Collection: The data collection will be both primary and secondary, as mentioned above. However, there are specific conditions that respondents must meet to be eligible to answer the questionnaire:

- They must be males or females over the age of 20 years and live in Chester, Cheshire.
- Before completing the questionnaire, they must see the presentation of power point slides provided by the researcher in order to know a little about the Morakot Gallery and its products.
- They must see some real products from the Morakot Gallery to deepen their understanding of the company and the products.
- The questionnaire will have only 20 questions for the target group to answer, including tick boxes and open questions.

❖ Accessing the data

In order to access the data, the researcher will give the questionnaire to people who live in Chester. The various groups of people who answer the questionnaire include students, business women, nurses, scientists, etc.

❖ Time constraints

There is a time limit for gathering the questionnaires as the respondents must first see the presentation and the real products from the shop, which is a time-consuming process, both for the respondents and for the researcher.

❖ Location

The respondents who answer the questionnaire must live in Chester, Cheshire. The questionnaire can be completed on hard-copy or online, however, most of the respondents are staff or students of the University of Chester.

❖ Budget

It will not be expensive for the researcher to undertake this research; financial cost will mainly be limited to the cost of paper and printing. Nonetheless, the researcher will spend time in the process of answering the research question, which requires reading of books and academics journals, explaining the research question to the target group, and the process of preparation.

3.5.2 Dependent and independent variables

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), dependent variables change in response to changes in other variables, whilst independent variables cause changes in dependent variables.

❖ Dependent variables

- Consumer behaviour
 - The frequency of shopping for personal items behaviour
 - The type of jewellery most frequently bought
 - The preference for authentic jewellery
 - Perspectives on the Morakot Gallery
 - The conditions of decision making process
- Marketing perspectives
 - Use of the media to gain information
 - Internet shopping usage
 - Brand recognition
 - Brand loyalty of respondents

❖ Independent variables

- Gender
- Age
- Occupation
- Status
- Period of time living in Chester, Cheshire

3.6 Research procedures

This research is expected to have a sampling number of approximately 50 participants. According to the website of Cheshire West Chester Council (2011), the population in 2009 was 326,600. However, this covers the whole of Cheshire, which is a broader area than will be focused on in this research. Therefore, the researcher has imposed specific conditions, as mentioned above, for the design of instruments appertaining to non-probability samples. The questionnaires will be presented to the respondents during the 49 days between August 15, 2011 and October 3, 2011. The questionnaire will be paper-based but can be completed on-line if so requested by participants.

3.6.1 Research method

There are three parts to the questionnaire, consisting of respondents' background and consumer behaviour background, marketing strategy and decision-making process.

Part I is relevant to respondents' personal information, such as gender, age, occupation, status. There are five questions with tick boxes, and one open question. This part is linked to understanding respondents as a sampling group related to local consumers and the globalisation of consumption (Usunier and Lee 2005). This part also links to independent variables mentioned by Noel (2009), which have an impact on dependent variables.

Part II is related to respondents' personal perspectives on their life styles, their preferences, their habits of shopping, and their opinions of Morakot Gallery. There are seven questions with tick boxes and one rating scale question in which respondents have to rank the number from the most important factor to the least important factor. The purpose of this part is to identify culture, especially Western culture (Cheshire, Chester), as according to Usunier and Lee (2005), culture is a guide for interaction and communication with others.

Part III is connected to marketing perspectives of respondents, for the purpose of adapting to marketing strategies in the next chapters (Dibb, Simkin, Pride, and Ferrell, 2006). There are eight questions with tick boxes and one open question.

3.6.2 Data analysis

This research uses data collection to analyse and scrutinise data using votes, pie charts, percentages, etc.

Part I of the questionnaire is evaluated as nominal scale with descriptive statistics of frequency and charts (pie charts) for purposes of illustration.

Part II of the questionnaire defines values by using ordinal and interval scales with descriptive statistics and percentage demonstration including charts.

Part III of the questionnaire is defined as nominal scale with descriptive statistics and charts.

3.7 Limitations

After finishing the data collection process, the researcher found some limitations to this research as follows:

- Only a small group of people completed the questionnaire, which may not differentiate enough to cover Chester's population.
- Due to time-constraints, the size of the sampling is less than it should be. In fact, the questionnaire should cover Chester's population by using a bigger number in the sampling.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The researcher has ensured the respondents' confidentiality by omitting names from the questionnaires. The questions are formed with consideration being given to ensuring that all respondents will be treated equally and will not experience any invasion of privacy. However, some questions may relate to potentially sensitive information, such as age and shopping budget.

In addition, since the questionnaire involves many processes, such as the necessity to watch a power point presentation and face-to-face contact with the researcher, the respondents are free to withdraw at any time; they can also ask for any further information related to the questionnaire or the dissertation freely to show a sense of informed consent.

The front page of the questionnaire states its purpose, the name of the researcher, confirmation that the respondents are free to pull out of the research at any time, and a short brief of the questionnaire.

3.9 Summary

This chapter shows the methodology of the research. It demonstrates the methods used to find the answer, starting with the research philosophy and the approach to the research. Then, it illustrates the research strategy and justification as well as a hypothesis of the research. Next, it explains the research design, including the instruments and variables, research procedures, limitations as well as ethical considerations. The next chapter will discuss the findings (chapter 4) from the methodology process (chapter 3) and the analysis result of the questionnaire.

Chapter4: Findings

4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter details the data collection process gathering information from 50 samplings of a focus group linked with the methodology from chapter 3. However, due to the limitations of sampling, the researcher has found only 33 respondents. Therefore, this chapter will elaborate the findings from 33 respondents related to the research question and the questionnaire.

This chapter will be divided into 2 main parts:

- **Primary Data**
 - Gender and total number of respondents
 - Age
 - Occupations
 - Status
 - Time living in Chester
 - Frequency of shopping
 - Most popular items
 - Preference for authentic jewellery
 - Respondents' opinions of Morakot Gallery
 - Preferences for the product lines of Morakot Gallery
 - Salient ranks for considering purchasing the products in general
 - Methods used for obtaining information
 - Use of the Internet for purchasing products
 - Internet shopping versus the local store
 - Budget for purchasing Morakot Gallery's products
 - Brand and its impact on buying decisions
 - Confidence in the Morakot Gallery brand
 - Brand loyalty versus willingness to try new brand
 - Respondents' reviews of products
- **Summary**

This chapter will include not only raw data from the respondents, but also tables and charts for clarification.

4.2 Primary data

4.2.1 Gender and total number of respondents:

The main questionnaire comes largely from primary data from 33 respondents. There are 15 male respondents and 18 female respondents.

Gender	Number of respondents
Male	15
Female	18
Total	33

Table1: Gender and total number of respondents

4.2.2 Age:

The age of respondents varies between 20 to over 70. Of the male respondents 10 are aged between 20 and 29, 3 are aged between 30 and 39, 1 is between 40 and 49 and 1 is between 60 and 69.

Age of Male respondents	Number of respondents
20-29	10
30-39	3
40-49	1
50-59	None
60-69	1
70+	None
Total	15

Table 2: Age of male respondents

Of the female respondents, 6 are aged between 20 and 29, 7 are between 30 and 39, 4 are between 40 and 49 and 1 is between 50 and 59.

Age of Female respondents	Number of respondents
20-29	6
30-39	7
40-49	4
50-59	1
60-69	None
70+	None
Total	18

Table3: Age of female respondents

4.2.3 Occupations:

Male respondents include 6 students, 1 business owner, 1 scientist, 1 administrator, and 6 employees. Female respondents consist of 3 students, 1 professor, 2 business owners, 1 assistant, 2 administrators, 3 employees, 1 salesperson, 3 doctors, 1 waitress, and 1 unemployed.

Occupation	Male	Female
Student	6	3
Professor	None	1
Business owner	1	2
Scientist	1	None
Assistant	None	1
Administrator	1	2
Employee	6	3
Salesperson	None	1
Doctor	None	3
Waitress	None	1
Unemployed	None	1
Total	15	18

Table4: Occupations of respondents

4.2.4 Status:

There are 9 male respondents who are single and 5 male respondents who are married, whilst 8 female respondents are single, 9 female respondents are married and 1 female respondent is divorced.

Status	Male	Female
Single	10	8
Married	5	9
Divorced	None	1
Total	15	18

Table5: Status of respondents

4.2.5 Time living in Chester:

Of the male respondents, 5 have lived in Chester for a year, 2 have lived in Chester for 2-5 years, 5 have lived in Chester for 5-10 years, 1 has lived there for 10-15 years, 1 has lived there for 15-20 years, and 1 has lived there for more than 20 years.

Of the female respondents, 4 have lived in Chester for a year, 6 have lived in Chester for 2-5 years, 5 have lived there for 5-10 years, and 3 have lived there for more than 20 years.

Year range	Male	Female
1 year	5	4
2-5 years	2	6
5-10 years	5	5
10-15 years	1	None
15-20 years	1	None
Upper than 20 years	1	3
Total	15	18

Table 6: Time respondents have lived in Chester

4.2.6 Frequency of shopping:

For males, the frequency of shopping for personal items such as clothes and accessories is for 3 respondents every week, for 3 respondents every two weeks, for 1 respondent every three weeks, for 7 respondents every month, and for 1 respondent every two months. In the same way, for females the frequency of shopping is for 6 respondents every week, for 2 every two weeks, for 4 every three weeks, and for 6 every month.

Frequency of shopping	Male	Female
Every week	3	6
Every two weeks	3	2
Every three weeks	1	4
Every month	7	6
Every two months	1	None
Total	15	18

Table7: Frequency of shopping

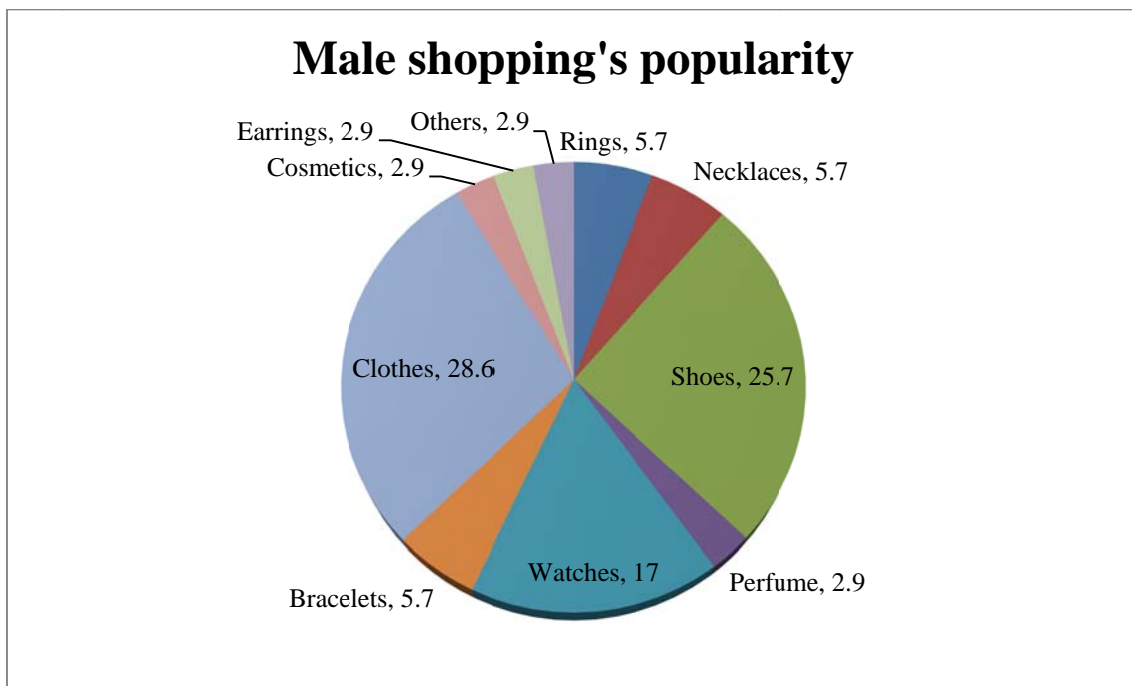
4.2.7 Most popular items:

In terms of jewellery and accessories shopping, replies of both male and female respondents vary. Since each respondent can select more than one answer for this question, the researcher will show the raw data and then calculate percentage via the pie chart later on in order to clarify the result.

The 15 male respondents answered with 35 votes and the 18 female respondents answered with 68 votes, as shown in the table below:

Items of shopping	Male	Female
Rings	2	8
Necklaces	2	3
Shoes	9	5
Perfume	1	6
Watches	6	4
Bracelets	2	3
Clothes	10	15
Cosmetics	1	12
Earrings	1	8
Pendants	None	1
Lingerie	None	3
Other (Home Stuff)	1	None
Total	35	68

In order to understand the popularity of the shopping items that respondents have indicated, the researcher has shown the results in percentages, using pie charts for both male and female. The total votes of each sex equal 100 percent, as demonstrated below:



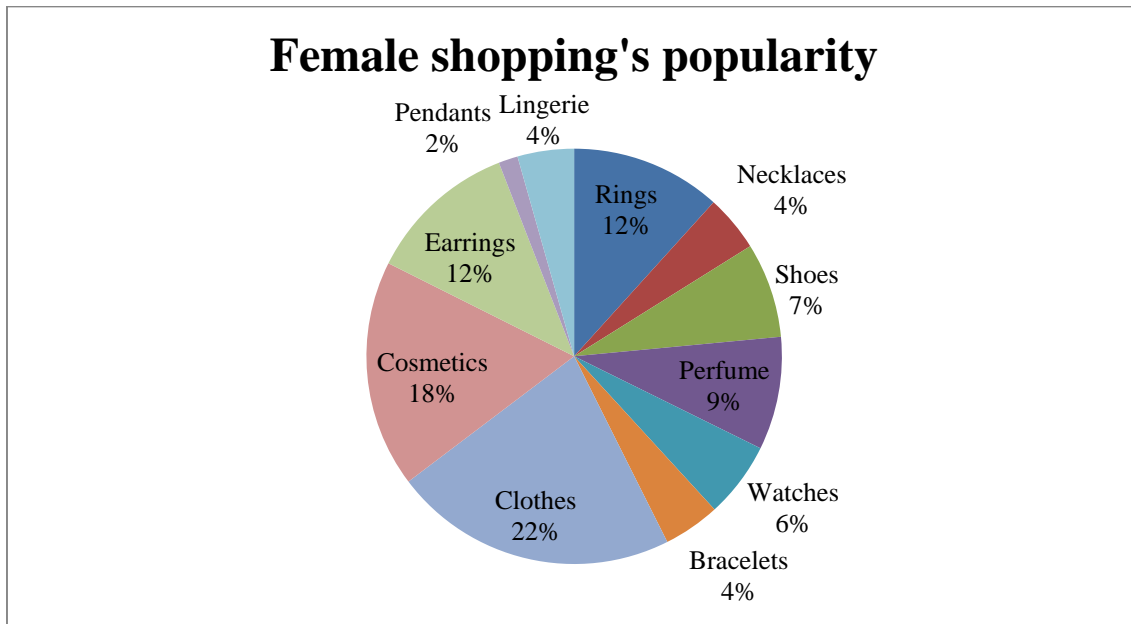


Figure5: Female shopping's popularity

4.2.8 Preference for authentic jewellery:

Results indicate that 12 male respondents like authentic jewellery, whilst 3 male respondents dislike authentic jewellery. On the other hand, female respondents are all happy with authentic jewellery. In other words, all 18 female respondents love genuine jewellery.

Preferences	Male	Female
Like	12	18
Dislike	3	None
Total	15	18

Table9: Preference for authentic jewellery

4.2.9 Respondents' opinions of Morakot Gallery:

The 14 male respondents have provided feedback indicating that they love the products from the Morakot Gallery, whilst 1 male respondent does not like them. Nevertheless, 11 male respondents think that they will consider purchasing the products from the shop in the future, whilst 4 male respondents will not consider purchasing the products in the future. However, all 18 female respondents love the products from the shop and will consider purchasing the products in the future.

4.2.10 Preferences for the product lines of Morakot Gallery:

Both male and female respondents have various answers since they were able to choose more than one answer. Therefore, the researcher will show both the raw number from the respondents and calculate all the responses in terms of percentage so as to understand the whole picture easier. Following the answer through the questionnaire, the respondents answered 24 votes within 15 male respondents and 44 votes within 18 female respondents, as shown in the table below:

The product line in Morakot Gallery	Male	Female
Rings	9	11
Earrings	4	11
Pendants	3	5
Necklaces	4	6
Bracelets	4	10
Brooches	None	1
Total	24	44

Table10: Preferences for the product lines of Morakot Gallery

To make it easier to understand, the researcher has shown the result in percentages by using pie charts for both male and female. The total votes of each sex equal 100 percent, which is demonstrated below:

Male Preferences for Product line of MORAKOT GALLERY

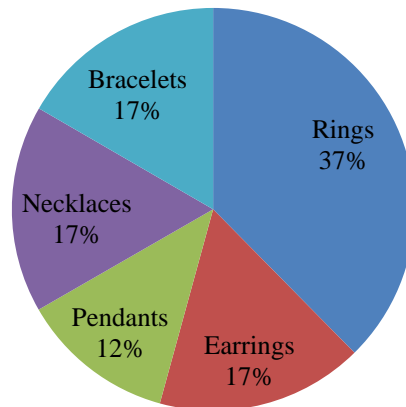


Figure 6: Male preferences for product lines of Morakot Gallery

Female Preferences for Product line of MORAKOT GALLERY

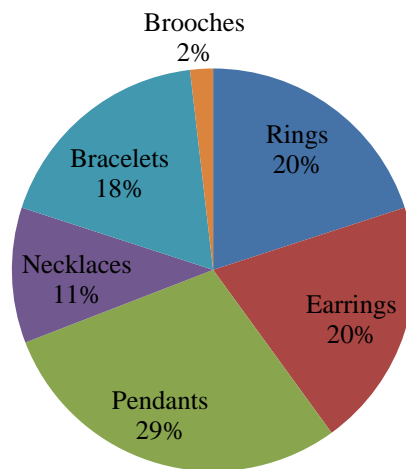


Figure 7: Female preferences for product lines of Morakot Gallery

4.2.11 Salient ranks for considering purchasing the products in general:

After surveying the perspectives of 33 respondents, the researcher is able to rank the criteria with the 1st rank being the most important and the 10th rank being the least important.

Male respondents' opinions:

The 1st rank is *the design of the product* and

the quality of the product

The 2nd rank is *the price of the product*

The 3rd rank is *the asking information* and

the try to see products before buying them

The 4th rank is *the new arrival products*

The 5th rank is *the service from the sales person*

The 6th rank is *the promotion or sale*

The 7th rank is *the refund*

Male respondents also chose others in the tick box options, which are *the place of the shop; whether it's nearby*, and *the decoration of the shop*; whether it is attractive or not.

Female respondents' opinions:

The 1st rank is *the design of the product*

The 2nd rank is *the price of the product*

The 3rd rank is *the quality of the product*

The 4th rank is *the service from the sales person*

The 5th rank is *the try and see products before bought them*

The 6th rank is *the new arrival products*

The 7th rank is *the promotion or sale*

The 8th rank is *the asking information*

The 9th is rank is *the refund*

The 10th rank is *the after sales service*

All the female respondents used the tick boxes without adding further comments and others ticked box options. Therefore, there are no additional answers for female respondents.

4.2.12 Methods used for obtaining information:

Male and female respondents have different ways of receiving information, as shown in the table below. Not all respondents answered this part of the questionnaire.

Ways of getting information	Male	Female
Television	3	3
Emails	5	7
Leaflet	4	6
Magazines	5	7
Text message	None	2
Mailings	None	1
Word of Mouth:	1	1
Total	18	27

Table11: Ways of getting information

Next, the researcher calculates the total votes of each gender in terms of percentage, using pie charts to compare results:

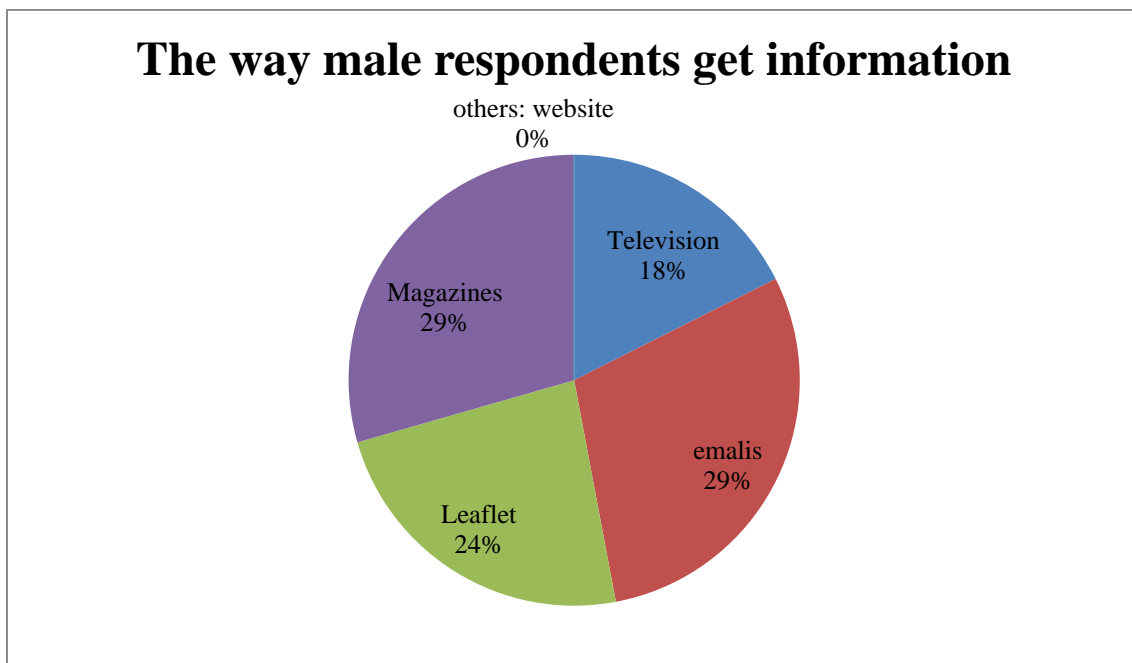


Figure8: The way male respondents get information

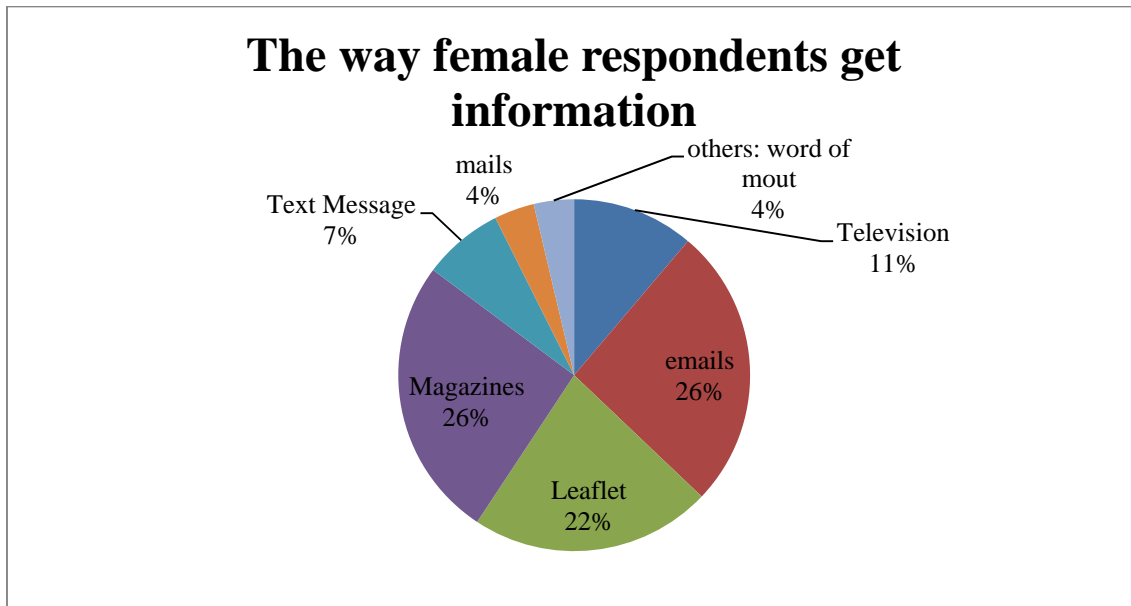


Figure9: The way female respondents get information

4.2.13 Use of the Internet for purchasing products:

The male respondents' answers show that 14 respondents use the Internet in order to help them make a decision, whilst 1 respondent does not use the Internet for that reason.

Similarly, of the female respondents, 13 respondents use the Internet to help them make a decision whilst 5 respondents do not, preferring to use a local store.

Way to go before making a decision	Male	Female
Using the Internet	14	13
Not using the Internet	1	5
Total	15	18

Table12: Use of the Internet for purchasing products

4.2.14 Internet shopping versus the local store:

As this topic is linked with the previous topic (4.2.13), the total votes of each sex will not be the total number of respondents, as this topic will merely involve the one who answers that he or she uses the Internet in order to make a decision before purchasing. Therefore, there are 14 male respondents for this topic and 13 female respondents. The aim of the researcher is to identify whether respondents choose Internet shopping or a local store. Of the male respondents, 10 respondents love to shop online, whilst 4 respondents prefer to go to a local store by themselves. Of the female respondents, 5 respondents love online-shopping through the Internet, whilst 4 respondents prefer to go

to a local store. In addition, 4 respondents enjoy both online-shopping and shopping in a local store.

Online-shopping or the local store	Male	Female
An online-shopping	10	5
A local store	4	4
Both (an online-shopping + a local store)	None	4
Total	14	13

Table13: Internet shopping versus the local store

4.2.15 Budget for purchasing Morakot Gallery's products:

The researcher has provided tick boxes for different ranges of budgets for this question. Of the male respondents, 3 respondents think they would spend 10 to 59 GBP, 3 respondents think they would spend 60 to 100 GBP, 7 respondents think they would spend 101 to 499 GBP and 2 respondents think they would spend 1001 to 5000 GBP.

Of the female respondents, 10 respondents think they would spend 10 to 59 GBP, 5 respondents think they would spend 60 to 100 GBP, 2 respondents think they would spend 101 to 499 GBP and 1 respondent thinks she would spend 500 to 1000 GBP.

Next, the researcher provides a table illustrating the budget range:

Budget range	Male	Female
10 to 59 GBP	3	10
60 to 100 GBP	3	5
101 to 499 GBP	7	2
500 to 1000 GBP	None	1
1001 to 5000 GBP	2	None
Total	15	18

Table14: Budget for purchasing Morakot Gallery's products

4.2.16 Brand and its impact on buying decisions:

The researcher asks respondents whether the brand has an influence on their buying decision or not: 12 male respondents think brands have an impact whilst 3 male respondents are not concerned about the brand. Similarly, 12 female respondents think brands have an effect on their buying decisions whilst 6 female respondents are not concerned about the brand.

The following table demonstrates the results of both male and female respondents.

Brand and its impact on buying decisions	Male	Female
Have an impact on buying decision	12	12
Do not have any effect	3	6
Total	15	18

Table15: Brand and its impact on buying decisions

4.2.17 Confidence in the Morakot Gallery brand:

This topic pertains to the previous topic (4.2.16), which identifies only the respondents who think the brand is essential in decision making. Consequently, the total votes of male respondents will be 12 votes and for female respondents will also be 12 votes.

To identify whether or not the Morakot Gallery, which is unknown to Chester, Cheshire, would be able to do business in Chester is very challenging. However, Morakot Gallery has already been established for more than 25 years in Bangkok, Thailand. The researcher wants to know whether or not the respondents are apprehensive about the brand of Morakot Gallery.

Of the male respondents, 11 respondents said they were concerned about the brand whilst 1 respondent said he was not concerned about it. Of the female respondents, 6 respondents said they were worried about the brand whilst the other 6 respondents said they were not worried about it.

The following table shows the answers of both male and female respondents.

Confidence in the Morakot Gallery brand	Male	Female
Concerned about the brand	10	6
Not concerned about the brand	1	6
Total	12	12

Table16: Confidence in the Morakot Gallery brand

4.2.18 Brand loyalty versus willingness to try new brands:

On this topic, the researcher gives respondents the chance to give more than one answer about whether they always go for the brand they are used to, always change the brand, or stick to the same brand but also love to try something new. As a result, the total votes of male respondents are 19 votes and female respondents 22 votes. Of the male respondents, 8 respondents vote for sticking to the same brand, 2 respondents vote for changing to a new brand, and 9 respondents love to try new brands as well as staying with the same brand. Similarly, of the female respondents, 4 respondents vote for the same brand, 6 respondents vote for changing to the new brand and 12 respondents vote for love to try new brands as well as sticking to the same brand.

The following table shows both genders' perspectives.

Brand loyalty vs willingness to try new brands	Male	Female
Stick to the same brand	8	4
Not a brand loyalty	2	6
Love to try new brand and still buy the same brand	9	12
Total	19	22

Table17: Brand loyalty versus willingness to try new brands

4.2.19 Respondents' reviews of products:

Following the methodology in chapter 3, the researcher gives respondents answering the questionnaire both tick boxes and open-questions. Below is the last question on the questionnaire, requesting recommendations from the respondents. The researcher will

quote all the replies in order to show real feedback. However, only 11 respondents comment on the recommendation part as follows:

...“The products were very nice. Maybe next time you could bring more variety as well as the price tags for the products.”

“Products are awesome; I think the price is quite high.”

“If I was trying a new brand, I would buy something cheaper first to test products and services (may be buy a special offer). Then, I will buy more expensive items if everything is satisfied.”

“I think that prices are higher than getting from my home country, India.”

“I introduce to the world market. Perhaps Morakot Gallery is too well-known to need partner recommendation.”

“I will change the brand when I feel upset of after sale service and low quality of the brand during using that product. I do recommend a local store rather than an online shop due to the trustworthy of the brand.”

“I see many precious stone shops in Chester. Still, they are not too popular. Most people in Chester depend on fashion. If Morakot Gallery has high price of the products, it might not be able to compete with other competitors. The design is very outstanding; however, the price is the very first priority to consider buying it. The design should be very outstanding like a brand-name product but not that high price (reasonable price).”

“Through the technology and new world market, shops must create a novel idea and must have a good strategy to gain good benefits and maintain regular customers.”

“Nice products.”

“I think your products would sell in a city like Chester.”

“If the product has a very high price, I always concern about the reputation of the brand. However, if the product has a low price, I do not care much about the brand. I think the shop should open both an on-line shop and a local store.”...

4.3 Summary

To sum up, all the main findings obviously come from the primary data, which is a questionnaire, by asking questions through the paper and concentrating on the focus group as mentioned earlier in chapter 3. In the next chapter, the researcher will analyse the information from chapter 4 and eventually come to the conclusion of the research question.

Chapter 5: Analysis and conclusion

5. Analysis and conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter draws on the information in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. To capture the essence of this chapter, the researcher will demonstrate, analyse and critically scrutinise the information from the literature review and the findings from the questionnaires in order to consider whether the findings meet the objectives as well as the hypothesis of the research question.

This chapter is a crucial part of the dissertation, which is comprised of 6 parts:

- Critical evaluation of adopted methodology
- Analysis/conclusions of each research objective (aim)
- Analysis/conclusions of the research question
- Overall conclusions
- Limitations of the study
- Opportunities for further research

5.2 Critical evaluation of adopted methodology

When the questionnaires have been completed, the researcher gathers and calculates the findings from chapter 3 and 4 mentioned earlier. All the processes are effective for the research question; the questionnaire is focused and relevant to the research question, the objectives and the hypothesis as this research pertains to realism, which is the truth within the respondents' minds.

Based on the hypothesis and using the deductive approach, (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the researcher follows the steps to anticipate the outcome.

From the findings at chapter 4, the researcher shows that almost every outcome meets the expectation. Nevertheless, some outcomes are unexpected and out of the scope of the objective or even the hypothesis owing to the various perspectives of respondents, which will be explicated later.

5.3 Analysis of each research objective (aim) and conclusion

This section will analyse the objectives already explained in chapter 1 to discover whether or not the findings match or oppose the objectives and the literature review discussed in chapter 2. Four objectives are mentioned in chapter 1.

5.3.1 The first objective is: To scrutinise the market in Chester, Cheshire relating to MORAKOT GALLERY's business in terms of a niche market such as the jewellery business.

Marketing Mix:

-Product-

For analysis of this objective, as discussed in chapter 2, there are various academic researches relevant to the jewellery business. Hence, the researcher will centre on the marketing mix from chapter 2 to scrutinise the similarity and the differentiation in this chapter, as jewellery is vulnerable and requires the good image of the products (Sarett, 1960). The results in chapter 4, based on information from 33 respondents, show that 16 respondents are concerned about the image of the product, especially products from the Morakot Gallery (from the topic at chapter 4: 4.2.17), which corresponds with findings in the literature review.

Jewellery is a popular gift for special occasions because of its romantic appeal to buyers (Sarett, 1960), which is likely to be supported by the 15 male respondents. Even though he does not wear jewellery, one of the male respondents mentioned that it is a good choice for buying for someone he loves, such as his mother or his girlfriend. From the findings, it can be seen that male respondents shop for products such as watches, 17 percent; rings, necklaces and bracelets, 5.7 percent; and earrings, 2.9 percent.

Similarly, the female respondents purchase the products almost every week, which is the highest vote (from chapter 4: 4.2.6). The products that they mostly buy are rings and earrings, 12 percent; watches, 6 percent; bracelets and necklaces, 4 percent; and pendants, 12 percent (from the topic at chapter 4: 4.2.7).

Furthermore, it is crucial for a jewellery business to be famous, genuine and unique (Bryson and Taylor 2010). This is very significant criteria for the respondents. After watching the power point presentation of the products and seeing samples of real products, all respondents seem happy and enthusiastic about the products. When the

respondents comment in the recommendation parts of the questionnaire, almost all female respondents say that they do not mind about the shop as long as the product is attractive to them and it is authentic jewellery (from the topic at chapter 4: Other recommendations from the respondents).

However, the researcher is unable to conclude whether the window display plays a significant role since window displays are not shown in the presentation or mentioned in the questionnaire (Holewa and Paul JCK, 2009).

In the same way, although according to White and Martha, 2011, 'everything old is new again' this has not been mentioned by any respondents in the questionnaire. The respondents only comment on their interest in the products. Moreover, the researcher does not ask any questions related to old products, focusing only on new arrivals, making the research questions seem incomplete. In accordance with chapter 4: 4.2.11, the topic of newly arrived products is in the 4th rank of male respondents and in the 6th rank of female respondents, meaning that new products are one of the factors influencing customers to purchase.

-Price-

Price plays a vital role in the jewellery business; and quality-based price is particularly important (Bryson, Taylor, 2010). According to the findings from chapter 4, occupation is a key to identifying the ability of respondents to afford the product. For example, the student respondents indicate a budget of 10 to 59 GBP, whilst those in other occupations, such as employees, identify a higher range of shopping budget.

Nonetheless, price is not the most important factor for respondents to consider. From the findings, the first two ranks of concern for male respondents are the design and the quality of the product, whilst the female respondents' first two ranks of concern are the design of the product. Both male and female respondents consider the price as the second rank of importance.

As a consequence, price is important but not the priority for the prospective customers. Therefore, when the Morakot Gallery prices its products, especially in Chester, Cheshire, it needs to ensure that the price is closely related to the quality of the products.

In the questionnaire, respondents selected various prices from 10 GBP to 5000 GBP. The Morakot Gallery, selling authentic gemstones of different quality, has a range of prices to meet customer needs and, as a consequence, the shop does not have a problem offering products to meet different requirements. Nevertheless, the shop needs to concentrate on the most popular price, which is in the range from 10 to 59 GBP (the findings, chapter 4) to achieve the most effective and profitable experience for both customers and the shop.

-Service and staff-

It is undeniable that service and staff are intangible factors (Dibb, Simkin, Pride, and Ferrell, 2006) that they have an enormous impact on the promotion of a healthy relationship with the customers of a business, especially the jewellery business. The findings indicate that the respondents consider good service, information and being able to see the product are all essential to the jewellery business. As a result, doing business is not the most difficult part; the challenging part is how to maintain the business to a superb level and to maintain consistency.

SWOT analysis:

-Strengths and Weaknesses-

To begin with, the strong point of the Morakot Gallery is the products themselves, which are rare in Chester, Cheshire, since the products are an oriental style, in particular, a Thai style. In accordance with the findings in chapter 4, the products are attractive to the respondents. For example, almost all respondents think that the products are very beautiful and the designs are unlike designs already available in Chester, Cheshire.

Second, the products of Morakot Gallery are all genuine, semi-precious gemstones and silver.

Third, Morakot Gallery offers a variety of product lines, such as rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, brooches, pendants and watches, which is advantageous to the company when considering opening the business in Chester, Cheshire since the respondents confirm that they like and buy products that the Morakot Gallery offers for sale. In other words, the shop has the benefit of a variety of choice.

However, the advantages mentioned above may not necessarily make it successful in Chester as these benefits are based on the results of a relatively small study. Weaknesses of the Morakot Gallery include the prevalence of established jewellers in Chester. Second, the Morakot Gallery is not a well-known brand and getting started in Chester would be tough at first. Third, Morakot Gallery needs to have a very effective inventory for stock-taking, as it does not have any inventories for a new branch, especially in a different continent, which may cause a problem for the shop in the future.

-Opportunities and Threats-

When considering external factors that might affect the Morakot Gallery, the work of Johnsen, Aycan, et al (2010) is considered. The first advantage of the area is that there are many tourists visiting the city of Chester every week. Chester is one of the most famous travel destinations, attracting people from all nations. Furthermore, Chester is situated in an area that is easy to visit from other big cities, such as Liverpool, Birmingham or even Manchester, within 45 to 60 minutes (Chester.com website, 2011). Second, according to the findings, the respondents are happy with the products from the Morakot Gallery and give positive feedback indicating that they would consider buying the products in the future. One respondent also mentions that it would be great if she could buy the product, not just watch the product in order to answer the questionnaire. Therefore, there is a very good chance that the Morakot Gallery could become successful in Chester.

However, there are also undeniable threats that may have an impact on the Morakot Gallery. Nowadays, there are many jewellery businesses in Chester, Cheshire, such as Powells the Jewellers, Kruger Jeweller, O C Jewellery Manufacturers & Design, Goldfields, Counterculture, Pandora, and etc. (city-visitor website, 2011). Hence, it would not be easy for Morakot Gallery to start its business amongst the intense competition; competitors already having established business relationships in the area (Johanson and Vahlne, 2011). In other words, competition includes competitive rivalry, threats of substitution, and the threat of other new entries (Porter, 2008). In addition, not only serious competition but also competitive price causes a serious concern for the Morakot Gallery. Since there are many competitors, price competition would inevitably be an issue. In the same way, the findings show that respondents like to switch to new brands, which means customers may or may not try the Morakot Gallery. As a result,

opening the shop in Chester involves risk. Furthermore, owing to the economic crisis (Gassman, Ken, 2009), the Morakot Gallery may face the difficulty of gaining a profit because jewellery is not a basic necessity.

5.3.2 The second objective is: To examine the feasibility of opening a Thai international business in Chester, Cheshire by considering cultural differences, strengths and weaknesses of two countries, and the central focus that can be relied on in both countries.

Doing business in different continents may have some similar and some different concerns. The findings shows that respondents buy various products such as earrings, rings, bracelets and necklaces, supporting the view of Larceneux, Rieunier and Fady (2007) that people love to have a variety of goods to choose from, depending on their preferences. In accordance with the decision making process concept, respondents purchase the product because they want it, although it is not a basic necessity. The findings show that respondents go shopping every month (the high rank, 13 votes). Thus, it is feasible that consumers might buy products that they want, such as jewellery (problem recognition stage). Furthermore, respondents prefer to search for information and receive news updates via emails and magazines (information search and evaluation). Later on, via the decision making process, they will decide whether to buy the product or not. In accordance with the findings, respondents feel positive about the products and are willing to buy them if they can. However, the UK market prefers soft selling rather than hard selling, which is something the Morakot Gallery needs to consider, due to the difference in culture (Usunier and Lee, 2005). Thus, the marketing strategies that work in Thailand may not be suitable for Chester.

According to The Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS) in 2004, Chester is a good place to run a business. Appendix 1 indicates that Chester has the best rate of business survival when compared with the North West and Great Britain. Thus, an international business, especially in Chester, is a feasible opportunity. For this reason, Douglas and Craig (2010) indicate that international businesses need to consider where to enter and how to access opportunities.

Moreover, the findings show that respondents think they would buy the products. However, one of the respondents says if the product is not expensive, he may try it right away. On the other hand, if the product is expensive, he will think carefully before

buying it. These facts buttress the work of Solomon, Bamossy, et al. (2010) regarding the response behaviour of problem solving.

Conducting business in Chester is very different from Bangkok, Thailand. In particular, Morakot Gallery needs to ensure it has sufficient suppliers so that the shop can meet customers' demands. However, supplies from a different continent will increase the cost of the product, hence, it is imperative that the shop sets its prices in line with buyer power and the profit of the shop.

5.3.3 The third objective is: To differentiate between a local store and an online shop in Chester, Cheshire in terms of consumer behaviour, custom and culture.

Marketing Mix:

-Place-

To analyse whether a local store or an online shop is more effective, the researcher analyses the findings and sees that nowadays respondents use the Internet for shopping. For instance, according to chapter 4, at 4.2.14, 15 respondents use the Internet for shopping whilst 4 respondents use both a local store and online-shopping. Nevertheless, 8 respondents, both male and female, prefer to shop only at a local store.

As a consequence, it is imperative that the Morakot Gallery should consider both a local store and an online-shop specifically for customers in Chester, Cheshire, if they want to do business in that area.

-Promotion-

Although the Morakot Gallery has online shopping, according to Chikweche and Fletcher (2011) it should also consider social networking, as this is a powerful tool for helping to know and come closer to the customer. In addition, social networks or E-tools (electronic tools) such as Facebook, Twitter and emails cost less than promotions such as advertisements, billboards, etc. The findings show that the respondents get information from emails, television, text messages, leaflets as well as mail. Another advantage of social networking is good for the business by helping both parties, the shop and the customer, to understand each other, is the things that Morakot Gallery should concern (Miller and Christakis, 2011 and Martin, 2011). Morakot Gallery has a website and a Facebook page; however, it is not up-to-date. Even if social networking

may not be 100 percent effective as people also gather information from other sources, it is a good opportunity that should not be overlooked and the shop should focus more efficiently on its social network.

Additionally, it is very interesting to note from the findings in chapter 4 that the respondents do not pay much attention to promotions. Male respondents rank it as being of least significance in their purchasing decisions. Similarly, female respondents rank the promotional factor in the last but two. Thus, it is not necessary for the Morakot Gallery to concentrate much on promotion.

These findings concur with those of Jihyun and Jihye (2005), indicating that respondents use the Internet in order to search for information before deciding to buy the product from either a local store or online shopping.

Richardson (2001), however, argues that shops are less important because of Internet shopping, which conflicts with the findings in this research, which show that even though respondents agree with Internet shopping, they still want to go to buy or sometimes see the product in the shop. Therefore, both a local store and online shopping are all important.

Consumer Behaviour:

The findings show that married respondents tend to spend more money on shopping than single respondents. Respondents who are students spend less money than respondents who have jobs. Marital status and occupation are connected, since most single respondents are students. These findings coincide with those of Hoyer and MacInnis (2004), who state that people spend money in relation to the influences of their social-class and households. Contradicting the findings of Hoyer, and MacInnis (2004), however, the respondents indicate that age is of little significance, as respondents of different ages seem to spend money at the same level, which supports the findings of Schupak (2005), who maintains that women buy jewellery as a symbol of self-reward.

5.3.4 The fourth objective is: To consider laws and regulations in terms of international business in Chester, Cheshire.

According to Cheshire West Chester Council (2011), there is business support provision for new businesses starting in Cheshire. It is necessary to understand the rules and

regulations before getting started. For example, different rates apply for domestic and business premises. Therefore, it is important to understand and be updated on the terms due to changing rules. Another example is the UK taxation system (Relf, 2011). This year is a good opportunity for Morakot Gallery to start the business since the UK government wants to attract investors to the country.

5.4 Analysis of the research question and conclusion

Is it feasible for MORAKOT GALLERY to open a business in Chester, Cheshire, and if so, should that business be a local store or an online shop?

Having analysed all available data, the researcher concludes that it would be feasible for Morakot Gallery to open a business in Chester. The findings show that respondents, 10 males and 12 females, are concerned about the brand, which means they think of Morakot Gallery as a brand even though it is unknown in Chester. However, initially it would be difficult marketing the brand and reaching prospective customers. From the findings in this research, in which 24 respondents identify brand reliability as impacting on their buying-decisions, it is clearly imperative that Morakot Gallery builds its brand name. Starting the business is not an end in itself but a means to maintaining a business. Therefore, doing business not only requires understanding of consumer behaviour and marketing strategies, but also knowledge of the local laws and regulations of the area. In particular, consideration should be given to the cost of investing in a local store or even an online shop to assure that the business can cover all the costs and still make a profit.

Advice would be available to Morakot Gallery from Cheshire West Chester Council, which provides beneficial advice to new businesses. For example, it has a small business setup programme occurring in December 7, 2011 providing free advice. The new business starter can enrol for that meeting. (Cheshire West Chester Council website, 2011).

5.5 Overall conclusion

Analysis of the research confirms the hypothesis that demographic variables, i.e. gender, marital status, income, occupation, impact people's decision making. The findings show the different opinions through different demographic variables of respondents, which support the hypothesis of the research.

5.6 Limitations of the study

Although this research is based, step-by-step, upon academic methods, the researcher has identified certain limitations of the study.

To start with, good feedback from respondents does not guarantee that they would become good and loyal customers in the future. According to Keiningham and Aksoy (2011), seeking to satisfy customers will not necessarily help the business gain more profit. Sometimes customers like the product but never buy it. As a result, even though the outcomes suggest that the respondents are positive about the product, in reality, by the time the Morakot Gallery opens, they may not do any business with them at all.

Secondly, 33 respondents completed this questionnaire, out of the whole of Cheshire's population, which, in 2009, was 326,600 (Cheshire West Chester Council's Website). As a consequence, the sampling of the respondents is somewhat small, and is difficult to consider as representative of the population in Chester, Cheshire. It is not possible, therefore, to assume that this result is completely correct.

Thirdly, the respondents who answered the questionnaire are mainly students and staff of the University of Chester, which will affect the results as they share similar occupations and backgrounds. Therefore, the sampling may lack differentiation in the feedback on the questionnaire.

Fourthly, the questionnaire does not cover some parts of the research. For example, there is no mention of the decor of the shop, the display, window shopping, or of previous designs regaining popularity in the market. Therefore, analysis of those aspects is not possible owing to absence of feedback.

Finally, the academic research in the literature review, (chapter 2), shows that 50 percent of the sources are from American journals and news, which may not apply to the UK market.

5.7 Opportunities for further research

Although the researcher has reached a conclusion with regard to the research question, there are some further options for research that would be beneficial to the Morakot Gallery in the future.

To begin with, it would be possible for the researcher to consider preparation of the questionnaire in more detail so that it would more successfully contribute to analysis and conclusion. For instance, this research focuses on the opening of a new business. Therefore, all the questions in the questionnaire are related to new business products, the focus group's opinion and consumer behaviour. However, the research may omit minor factors that may be relevant to the research question, such as the window display, the decor and older products maintaining their popularity on the market. As a result, the research may have insufficient information to enable thorough analysis and scrutiny in order to reach the conclusion. Hence, for future research, the researcher should think about the questions in the questionnaire thoroughly.

Secondly, due to insufficient sampling when compared with the size of Chester's population, the researcher should use a bigger sampling for the focus group to gain different perspectives, which may bring about different conclusions.

Thirdly, the respondents, being largely students and staff at the University of Chester, may share similar lifestyles or aspirations. It would be better, therefore, if the respondents came from different backgrounds and had a variety of occupations, which could possibly lead to a different outcome and be more reliable.

5.8 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter is the last part of the dissertation showing the result and outcome by analysing and scrutinising the literature review, the methodology, and the findings. The researcher concludes by predicting the likely success or otherwise of Morakot Gallery entering the Chester market and also provides the pros and cons of introducing the business. Finally, the researcher provides suggestions for further research.

Although starting a business requires taking a risk, Harford (2011) maintains that *“Ultimate success is almost always built on prolific failure”*.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: RBS, Business Birth Rate

Retrieved from

<http://www.investincheshire.com/xsdbimgs/Economic%20Overview%20Cheshire%20%20Warrington.pdf>

Questionnaire created by MISS SUPAPAT SINLAPAWANICH An MBA student of University of Chester

The questionnaire is for a focus group that has a tendency to purchase jewellery with the aim of surveying target's opinions through the MORAKOT GALLERY's products. The questions will relate only to the target's behaviour and perspective. Please feel free to leave any questions if you feel uncomfortable. Nevertheless, the author thinks carefully about each question so that it will be significant for the process of the survey.

Morakot Gallery is a jewellery shop situated in Bangkok, Thailand that has been open for more than 25 years. Morakot Gallery does both wholesale and retail products concentrating on authentic Gemstones. The products of Morakot Gallery are rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, pendants, brooches and even rough gemstones. Morakot Gallery also does a special piece of jewellery at customers' request, named an order-made product.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to discover whether people in Chester like the products of Morakot Gallery or not. This may then lead to a future business plan.

Target's background

1. Sex ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Age ☐ 20-29 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 60-69
 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 70+
3. Occupation (please specify) :
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee | <input type="checkbox"/> House wife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professor, Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Saleperson | <input type="checkbox"/> Waiter, Waitress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor, Nurse, Caretaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scientist | <input type="checkbox"/> Accountant | <input type="checkbox"/> Lawyer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Technician | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artist | <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary | <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Director | <input type="checkbox"/> Others |
4. Status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Other:
5. How long have you lived in Chester, Cheshire?
- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 3 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 Years | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 20 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 years | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-15 years | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A year | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-20 years | |

Consumer Behaviour

6. How often do you shop for personal items such as clothes, accessories, etc.?
- ☐ Everyday
- ☐ Every week
- ☐ Every two weeks
- ☐ Every three weeks
- ☐ Every month
- ☐ Every two months
- ☐ Every three months
- ☐ Others (please specify) :
7. What products do you mostly buy in terms of jewellery and accessories?
- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rings | <input type="checkbox"/> Watches | <input type="checkbox"/> Earrings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Necklaces | <input type="checkbox"/> Bracelets | <input type="checkbox"/> Pendants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> Lingerie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perfume | <input type="checkbox"/> Cosmetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: |
8. Do you like authentic jewellery? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Looking through the product from **Morakot Gallery**, do you like its products?
☐ Yes (go to question No.10) ☐ No (go to question No.11)
10. Do you think you might consider purchasing the products?
☐ Yes (go to question No.11) ☐ No (go to question No.12)
11. Which product lines might you consider purchasing? (you can tick more than one box)
☐ Rings
☐ Earrings
☐ Pendants
☐ Necklaces
☐ Bracelets
☐ Brooches
☐ Others:
12. What is/are the most important condition(s) that affect your decision before purchasing a product?(Please identify the number, with the most important being No. 1 to the last number or leave if it is less important)
☐ After sale service,
☐ Price of the products
☐ Quality of the product
☐ Design of the product
☐ Asking information
☐ Refund
☐ Service from the sale person
☐ Try and see the product before bought it
☐ New arrival products
☐ Promotion or Sale
☐ Others:

Marketing perspective

13. Which media do you prefer to gain more information of the product that you are interested in?
☐ TV ☐ emails ☐ Leaflet ☐ Magazines ☐ Others: ...
☐ Text message ☐ mails ☐ Radio
14. Do you use the Internet in order to help you make a decision before you purchase a product?
☐ Yes (go to question No.15)
☐ No : what do you use.....(go to question No.16)

15. If you answered yes, do you trust the Internet shopping-online or do you prefer the local store for purchasing the product? (please answer)
- ☐ Yes I do. I trust the online shopping.
- ☐ No I don't. I do prefer local store for shopping
16. After you saw the product of the **Morakot Gallery**, how much would you consider spending on this product?
- ☐ 10 to 59 GBP ☐ 500 to 1000 GBP
- ☐ 60 to 100 GBP ☐ 1001 to 5000 GBP
- ☐ 101 to 499 GBP ☐ upper than 5000 GBP
17. Does the brand of the product have an impact on your buying-decision?
- ☐ Yes (go to question no.18)
- ☐ No (go to question no.19)
18. If it has an influence on your buying-decision, are you concerned as to the reliability even though this brand has been established for 25 years in Bangkok, Thailand?
- ☐ Yes: (please specify reason):.....
- ☐ No: (why? please explain):.....
19. Do you regularly change the brand when purchasing a product or do you always go back to the same brand? (Can choose more than one choice)
- ☐ Always stick to the same brand
- ☐ Always change the brand (not a brand-loyalty person)
- ☐ Love to try something new like a new-brand product
20. Any recommendation?
-
-
-
-
-
-

THANK YOU

Appendix 3: Power Point Presentation